

SITUATION REPORT NO. 20
INCIDENT NO. 97-003
DATE: February 1, 1997 TIME: 11:00 a.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Winter storms and blizzard conditions statewide.
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: North Dakota's livestock producers have sustained \$32,760,000 in estimated losses since winter storms began, it was reported January 31 to Richard Rominger, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. That figure includes facility losses, livestock deaths, additional feed consumption costs, wildlife depredation of feed, and milk dumping. The full impact of snow removal costs and future productions losses will not be determined for months. The N.D. Department of Agriculture estimates 6,000 to 9,000 livestock deaths have occurred as a direct result of the storms. During the past week, cattle conditions deteriorated from 55 percent to 66 percent very poor to fair condition. Forty-seven percent of hay and forage supplies are currently rated short to very short, and 60 percent of feed is difficult to access.

Clearing roadways so all North Dakotans have emergency access remains a priority for snow removal crews. Homes without access include: one in Sioux County; four in Grant County; 20 in Stutsman County; three in Dickey County; four in LaMoure County; and 10 percent of rural residents in Barnes County.

Melting snow and freezing rain combined January 30 for slippery road conditions in northeastern North Dakota. Several vehicles slid off roadways, including a school bus with children. A Nelson County law enforcement officer was enroute to help the bus when his vehicle slid into a ditch two miles east of McVile. Several sports teams were stranded at area high schools because dangerous road conditions prevented travel. Freezing rain

added a layer of ice over hardened snow cuts. Area law enforcement spent the evening assisting motorists.

Walsh County officials received reports of two farm buildings that have collapsed under heavy snow, resulting in \$30,000 in damages.

4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: A Lutheran church in Petersburg, Nelson County, opened a shelter to motorists stranded because of icy conditions on January 31. The Lakota Community Center remained open past operating hours for a basketball team. Approximately 50 people spent the night at the community center, and seven stayed at the Lutheran church. In addition, approximately 30 children stayed with friends or at storm homes in the Dakota Prairie School District. In Steele County, 30 stranded Carrington area students and six adults stayed overnight at the local high school.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: The Governor announced that Friday, January 31, is the closing of the disaster incident period on Friday morning at a press conference at the state capitol. The incident period began January 3, enabling certain emergency snow removal activities that have taken place since then to be considered eligible for federal and state reimbursement. Eligible snow removal activities occurring after Friday may be reimbursed as long as the work was clearly mapped/planned prior to the incident period closing.

Richard Rominger, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, announced on January 31 the development of the Foundation Livestock Relief Program to provide assistance to eligible livestock producers affected by snow disaster. Under the provisions of the program, Farm Service Agency will provide assistance with a 30 percent cost share on the lesser of the actual feed costs or the computed 30 days of normal feed ration. The Deputy Secretary also announced a 15-day extension of a snow removal program for accessing livestock feed.

The N.D. National Guard and U.S. Air Force personnel were staffing 24 snow removal missions on February 1. National Guard personnel also were monitoring one N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) mission in Grant County. New National Guard missions scheduled to begin February 1 included Nelson County, where two dozers have been assigned. A Pembina County mission scheduled to begin January 31 was delayed until February 1 because of icy road conditions. Staffing for the 24 National Guard and the one N.D. DOT mission requires: 76 Army Guard, eight Air Guard, and 21 Air Force personnel and one N.D. DOT employee. Road crews are operating 30 dozers, 10 snow

blowers, 25 tractor-trailers, 25 support vehicles, four dump trucks and two loaders. Of the 44 missions completed, 15 were N.D. DOT missions being monitored by the National Guard. Requests are pending for eight additional missions.

A team of National Guard, N.D. Division of Emergency Management, N.D. DOT and U.S. Air Force representatives has decided to reassign U.S. Air Force snow blowers to priority areas, where crews are working to obtain emergency access. The team, which meets daily, is working on a plan to release Air Force snow blowers to the Minot and Grand Forks Air Force Bases when present assignments are completed.

Two N.D. DOT snow blower crews have completed efforts to help county operations and have returned to the Valley City and Fargo Districts for reassignment. One N.D. DOT snow blower has been tasked to Grant County for clearing of roadways. The transportation agency has an estimated 40 dozers under contract to assist N.D. DOT crews with efforts to push back drifts on two-lane roads and to clear medians on four-lane highways. Subject to favorable weather, N.D. DOT estimates the clearing of drifts to be accomplished in 10-14 days.

A N.D. Division of Emergency Management report indicates that emergency two-way access has been attained on nearly 90 percent of the state's county and township roads. Road crews also achieved a 54 percent average of push back of snow. Efforts to obtain emergency access were nearing completion in the northwest zone where 12 counties and the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation reported almost 98 percent access. Road crews have averaged nearly 84 percent push back of snow. The southwest quadrant averaged nearly 90 percent emergency access and 81 percent push back of snow for 14 counties and the Standing Rock Indian Reservation. In the northeast zone, emergency access averaged nearly 94 percent and push back of snow 28 percent in 14 counties and the Spirit Lake and Turtle Mountain Indian Reservations. In the southeast, 12 counties report nearly 75 percent emergency access and 27 percent push back of snow.

The number of counties where snow removal efforts are complete now totals 15 with the additions of Dunn and Mercer Counties on January 31. The 15 counties are located in the far west, extreme northwest and north central areas of North Dakota.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.

9. OTHER: The weather forecast for February 1 calls for partly to mostly cloudy skies with flurries in the northeastern part of the state. Highs will be 25 in the northeast to around 40 in the southwest. Sunday, February 2, will be cloudy with highs from 20 in the northeast to 35 in the southwest. The extended forecast for Monday and Tuesday is for a chance of snow in the southwest on Monday and the southeast on Tuesday. Highs will be in the 20's and lows 5 to 15.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports and photos of snow removal efforts are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director